

The Times Dispatch

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MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 1914.

THE PARCEL POST VS. THE EXPRESS COMPANIES.

The last of the four large companies to acknowledge to its stockholders the conditions confronting the companies in express transportation is the Adams Express Company. It intimates that a reduction in the present dividend rate of 12 per cent per annum may have to be made.

The Wells Fargo directors at their semiannual dividend meeting early last week declared the customary dividend of 6 per cent, but admonished the stockholders that "a continuance of that dividend rate may not be warranted." The American Express Company lately lowered the semiannual dividend of 2 per cent from transportation proceeds to 2 per cent. If that company similarly reduces the 8 per cent semiannual dividend out of other income at the March meeting, the stock will be on an 8 per cent dividend basis, as compared with the 18 per cent it has regularly paid for the last seven years. The United States Express, which, up to that time, has been yielding dividends at the rate of 6 per cent annually, has paid none since the fiscal year 1912.

Since the increase of the weight limit of the parcel post service to twenty pounds on August 15, the small package business of the express companies has fallen off between 25 per cent and 32 per cent, according to the Wall Street Journal. Beginning with January, 1914, the parcel post weight limitation is to expand to fifty pounds for first and second zone deliveries, and to twenty pounds for all other zones. These two zones embrace a territory within a radius of 150 miles. We are told that the general expectation is that this expansion will develop the so-called local merchandise business for the government service at the expense of the express companies, which have handled it until now. It should be noted here, however, that as distance increases the margin of difference between the two sets of rates decreases, while in the fifth and sixth zones express rates are actually lower than parcel post rates. A twenty-pound parcel in the fifth zone, 600-1,000 miles, would cost 18 cents less by express, and in the sixth zone, 1,000-1,400 miles, it would cost 20 cents less.

On February 1, the practically level reduction of 16 per cent of all interstate rate schedules goes into effect. It is estimated that as a result of this change the revenues of the express companies will be reduced by \$27,000,000 or more. How the companies will be affected is problematical. Some, including members of the Interstate Commerce Commission, are of opinion that the reduced interstate rates will enable the express companies to develop a large amount of new business, probably enough to offset the losses on rates.

If the parcel post service is increased to seventy-five pounds and then to 100 pounds, as contemplated by the administration, it will only be a question of time, say some express authorities, until the express business "will be seriously crippled and perhaps forced to discontinue entirely." Meanwhile, the express companies are curtailing costs of operation as largely as possible. Another year will give a definite line on the future of both carrier services, and determine whether the government is to occupy the field alone.

Here's a pretty howdy-do. The tax assessors of Hamilton County, O., have decided to place on the taxable list millions of personal property not hitherto included in the tax returns. They have opened war on the members of Cincinnati's exclusive set, and are using the society columns of the local newspapers as a medium by which to determine just what jewels and costly gowns and furs are owned by the Cincinnati 400. They clipped the newspaper reports of a recent ball and noted the jewels and garments worn. They are making a card index, and when the deputy assessors go the rounds the members of society will be asked to include the jewels and gowns used on occasions reported in the society columns of the newspapers. No beautification without taxation.

They say the government minted no silver half-dollars last year, because there were enough in the country. It may be so, but you cannot prove it by use.

Three hundred and two persons were killed by automobiles in New York during 1913. It would be interesting to see how the numbers will decline in 1914 if a few of the murderers are sent to the penitentiary.

More than 25,000 robbers were legally executed in the province of Szechuen, China, last year. But President Yuan still thinks enough dangerous men are alive to steal his good name.

The man who was fined \$15 for taking a post on a street car probably wishes they had his goat.

THE LEGISLATIVE OUTLOOK.

If the "Views of our Legislators," which we have been printing on this page, do not show unanimity as to the needs of the Commonwealth they at least give us some indication of certain legislation we may reasonably expect.

Analyzing the replies of those members whose views we have published, it appears that it appears to us that upon at least three important questions there is promise of constructive legislation. These are:

1. Reform of our tax code.
2. Amendment of the primary law.
3. Adjustment of the fee system.

It is fairly certain that we need not anticipate the enactment of general tax reform laws at the regular session of Assembly. Even those members who agree with us that this is the all-important issue before the people think that in the crowded calendar of a sixty-day session little time will be found for the mature and deliberate discussion of this intricate subject.

There is a general belief among legislators that tax reform must be worked out at an extra session of Assembly, held perhaps, as Speaker Byrd has suggested, in the autumn of the present year. But there is much divergence of view as to what should be done in the meantime. Some believe another special commission will be of service, others advocate public hearings in various parts of the Commonwealth.

Our belief is that the only bill which the General Assembly will pass will be a bill which the General Assembly has drawn. Consequently, we shall advocate the appointment of a strong joint committee of the House and Senate to hold hearings if they think best, to call for expert opinion and to draft a definite bill as soon as possible. This program, we have no doubt, will meet with the approval of Governor-Elect Stuart, who must issue the call for the extra session.

The basis of the new tax code, which the people demand, is even more uncertain. There appears to be a remarkable even division of opinion between centralized assessment and separation—a division similar to that in the Assembly of 1912.

As we have often pointed out, this division rests, in the vast majority of cases, on no other foundation than that of loss or gain. Some Delegates and Senators, he it said to their credit, will advocate any system of tax reform that promises genuine and lasting relief; others, in a determination to reflect the will of their constituents rather than the will of the people of Virginia, will champion that system of reform which benefits their country, and will oppose any plan that will work hardship on the local taxpayers.

It is useless to quarrel with these men or to condemn their stand; human nature is human nature.

Viewed in this light, then, the only forecast of specific reform that can be made is the very obvious one that the plan which will be most favored will probably be that which benefits the largest representation in the House and Senate. Let us hope that from discussion and study will be evolved a plan which will satisfy the majority and yet bring relief to those classes of property and to those sections of the State which are now bearing an unjust burden of taxation.

The outlook for amending the primary law is bright. One by one our legislators are coming to see that the only primary law worthy of the name is one which will throw about party elections the same safeguards that protect general elections from fraud. It is not too much to say that many members of the House and Senate are determined not only to strengthen the primary law, but to make our general election law even more stringent. Those who will give begrudging assent to primary reform, "if we are to have primaries," are few in number.

We have been pleased to note that the modifications of the fee system proposed by The Times-Dispatch and other papers are meeting with very general favor. There is a strong element ready to act at once in the case of those officers who are manifestly overpaid, and to place them without delay on a salary basis. There is likewise general evidence of a determination to pass a law giving the public the facts as to the fees received by all officers.

The Times-Dispatch is hopeful that the Assembly of 1914 may make for itself a noble record of constructive service. Many of the members are men of high qualities and earnest purpose. But a majority of them are altogether without legislative experience. This means that the record of the Assembly will largely depend upon its leadership. Have we men whose transparent honesty and tested ability will win the confidence and the support of new members? Have we veterans whose vision is keen and whose ideals are high? Upon the answer to that question more than upon any other consideration will depend the record of the new Assembly.

Alfred Noyes, considered by many the foremost living British poet, visited the grave of Edgar Allan Poe, in Baltimore, and placed a handsome wreath upon his tomb. Standing there, he said: "I consider Poe one of the most distinctive of American poets. He is surely and securely among the immortals. I regard Emerson as the greatest American poet, but Poe ranks almost equally as high, though quite in another way." And yet in Richmond we refuse to preserve the only memorial we have of Poe, the old South-west Literary Messenger building. When it comes to showing our appreciation of Richmond's illustrious poet, we sit still with hands folded.

A new plea for insanity was advanced in the New York courts Friday when it was claimed that Margaret Lima shot Meyer Simons because she had "movie mania." The plea is a moving one, to be sure, but we fear it will be encouraged by the film producers.

A VIRGINIA CLASSIC.

Not a little pride is taken by our people in the latter-day prominence to which Virginians are attaining in the field of American literature. This is well in itself. It is a just and a pardonable pride. Yet it is frequently, by suggestion at least, at the expense of proper and deserved appreciation of what is due Virginia authorship of the past. Often its manifestation either implies comparison detrimental to the old school of Virginia authors or woeful ignorance of what they produced.

These reflections are prompted by a contribution to the "News for Bibliophiles" column of the New York Nation. The writer deals in a general way with the place in literature of the Randolphs, the Beverleys, the Stiths and the Munfords—all kin—but especially with William Munford, and the translation of the Iliad of Homer by that Virginia man of letters.

This translation was made amid the demands of many public duties, was completed about a month before the translator's death, which occurred in 1825, and was published by his widow in 1846. Of the work Munford himself wrote:

How far I have succeeded in this difficult enterprise, the public will judge, if not prevented from reading this work by the prejudice unfortunately existing against American poetry. I bond, however, that some of the lovers of Homer will not be unwilling to behold their favorite author arrayed in such various suits of apparel as may be furnished by artists of different tastes. Pope has equipped him in the fashionable style of a modern fine gentleman; Cowper displays him, like his own Ulysses, in "ragged unseemly" or in the uncouth garb of a savage. Surely, then, there is room for an effort to introduce him to the acquaintance of my countrymen in the simple yet graceful and venerable costume of his own heroic times.

His Homer, however, was not William Munford's only gift to the Virginia literature of his period. Among others, he "published at Richmond in 1798 Poems and Compositions in Prose on Several Occasions"—largely a tragedy, "Almorán and Hamet," founded on an Eastern tale of that name; versions of the Odes of Horace and metrical versions of Ossian.

How many of the present generation know aught of Munford's Homer, or of the works of other Virginia authors of his and prior generations, which, in the time and circumstances, constituted a library of Virginia classics? It is not to the credit of our pride, our literary appreciation and our concept of scholarship that the tributes to letters of these early writers, wherever they still exist, lie ignored, moldering, unopened and unexploited on the bookshelf. We fear that here 'tis all too true applies:

Not off at home doth genius brightly shine,  
No more than doth a gem within the mine.

In the case of Munford, the loss is more than one of pride. His Homer, neglected though it has been for two generations, will bear comparison in every way with the best efforts of the world's masters. His versification is excellent, his appreciation of literary values is high, and his understanding of Homer is little short of remarkable. We realize the greatness of the claim when we make it, but Munford caught the spirit of the blind Bard of Chios as surely and as brilliantly as Edward Fitzgerald caught the spirit of that old Persian bacchanalian, Omar Khayyam. Especially is this true of the remarkable rendering of Homer's adjectives—the real key to the beauty and the spirit of the Greek. Compared with Munford's graphic figures and shining metaphors, the tawdry version that passes for Pope's seems as the work of a schoolboy.

ANOTHER "SURVIVOR."

"The last survivor" of the "old-time West" returns to publicity, and to the East so frequently that we have ceased to number his army of veterans. We have stopped reading of their exploits or giving them a second thought, beyond wondering that the West was ever a wilderness with this immense population claiming to have lived there for fifty years.

But from Colorado has come back a "pioneer" whose story, if true, is interesting. This worthy boasts the name of "Rocky Mountain Vic," and he claims to have been the last man to leave Custer's troop before it was massacred. This, however, is unimportant.

What struck us in the narrative of the long-named ranker was his calm report that he forsook the government service and became a professional buffalo-hunter because the hides of the prairie king were selling at the "fabulous price" of \$2.75 each. During a single year, Rocky Mountain Vic declares that he killed 5,000 buffaloes. Can you believe it? Can you even bring yourself to the point where you will even try to believe it? And yet, there are scores of reputable authorities who declare the story not improbable.

The best proof that Secretary Bryan is making good is that the public has ceased to laugh when the paragraphs poke fun at him.

When all is said and done, we are prepared to defend Richmond rain as the most wetting in the world. And isn't that what rain is for?

If there is so much suffrage enthusiasm in the ranks, why not let General Rosalie Jones and her army carry a suffrage petition up and down the Mexican boundary line?

A rainy Sunday is one of those days when a man can fulfill the Scotch minister's definition of humility, "feeling as if your best friend died in the morning, the bank failed at noon, and all your kin came to visit you at night."

About the most expensive gift a State ever received was \$1,200 a legislator returned up North, because he had been unable to attend to his duties on account of sickness. Look for his name on the next list of candidates for fat jobs.

Views of the Virginia Editors

Trying to Pick the Winner.

When one reads the Baltimore papers and all things published of the advantages and facilities which make Baltimore the proper location for the proposed government armor plate mill, then one is led to think Baltimore the only place.

But then you may read in The Times-Dispatch that Richmond has everything that Baltimore has and some other fine points beside. Well, the truth is Richmond has one other fine point which we really believe would get her the mill, if she would only recognize and push that point for all it is worth.

That point is Westpoint. With our limited experience in wire-pulling, we cannot expect to compete in exerting influence at Washington alongside of such skilled old dames as Baltimore and Richmond, but "influence" and "pull" are not as effective under the Wilson administration as they were said to be under Republican rule. We have it the requirement right here in Westpoint. We could have the government \$100,000 on the purchase of a site to begin with, and in transportation, overhead charges and the like, nearly as great an amount each year.

To secure a site for so large a plant near Baltimore and on deep water it would have to be located so far down the bay that it would be half-way to Westpoint anyway, and Richmond would have the mill nearer her city than Baltimore. If located at line, at Westpoint, then if located at any suitable site on the James River, perhaps our play is to boost both Baltimore and Richmond, with the result that the claims of each will be so strong that the other cannot win, and we could reasonably expect to turn their influence in our behalf, for already we are the strongest link in the commercial chain which binds these two leading cities of the South—Westpoint News.

Loan Sharks. People who loan money are entitled to fair return, and people who are forced to borrow when they have neither credit nor collateral can hardly expect as advantageous terms as most loans, but there is a limit at which the human conscience might stop, and the most rapacious loan shark quit.

A sub-woman at police headquarters told the chief of police of borrowing \$20 two or three years ago. She had receipts for \$75 paid on that loan, and there was still \$12 of the debt remaining. In other words she had paid \$75 and gotten the original debt reduced \$75. Chief Kier requested a lawyer to look into the matter, and he soon returned with a check for \$20.96 for the balance. The loan people promptly gave up when confronted by legal proceedings.

There is nothing right about that sort of business. That is an oppression of the poor that has no place in a humane and civilized society. There should be a law, and that law enforced as to make such cases impossible, the return of any part of the money no release from legal prosecution.—Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch.

A Higher Standard for Normal Colleges.

The extraordinary pressure on the State's treasury for appropriations by departments and institutions, as shown by the appeals put forth before the Finance Committee of the Senate in Richmond last week, would, if allowed, altogether swamp the treasury.

The heaviest demands that came to our attention were those of our newly established female normal colleges. Appropriate for their benefit have within reasonable bounds always been regarded by the County News with favor. It favored the increase of the number of female normal colleges, a number of State institutions for men. It is hard for us to recognize the merits of their claims, however, in view of the widespread wish heard for an institution for women, in connection with our State university, to supply women with higher education. What are these institutions doing? They have a very large number of students who are not there studying to become teachers. What are they being taught? When last investigated the subject the old institution at Farmville taught many what an ordinary graded school was expected to supply. The sum advanced for the new normal colleges asks for buildings and endowments from the incoming Legislature exceeds \$100,000.

The General Assembly should take steps to enforce a standard of entrance requirements above that of the graded schools, and while having these institutions instruct in normal course, make them secondary schools, comparable with such institutions as Randolph-Macon Woman's College at Lynchburg. If opportunities are furnished women, otherwise the appropriations for them should be very moderate.

The people of Virginia are, we are satisfied, willing to pay liberally to educate competent teachers, and to give higher education for women, but they are not willing to pour out a \$25,000 appropriation to furnish institutions largely devoted to finishing off girls' education in a perfunctory manner. Are they not now asked so to do?—Lexington News.

More "Kliver."

"Suffragists! Get Little Comfort From President Cleveland in the esteemed (frequently) Richmond Times-Dispatch. How nice of him! But he will have a cold from a pair of blankets after his cold reception."—Halifax Gazette.

A Hoax From the Southwest.

Big Stone Gap can boast of lots of things, and one of these is the finest Masonic lodge-room in the State, the city of Rich and not excepted.—Big Stone Gap Post.

He Knows.

Allah, Christ, Brahma, God, Creator Thou, Known in a thousand ways, By thousand tongues, does brag and praise Of what we deem the right. The path that we feel leads to Thee, Bring to Thee, Lord, delight? Ah, no, no, what do creed and doctrine mean? And who can say which road is best? I want no medium between Thy Maker and myself. He knows the doubt that comes by stealth. The faith that follows conflict, and He sendest rest. F. AMELIA HOFFMAN. Statesville, N. C.

Abe Martin



Nearly every day we meet some fellow who moved to Florida once. It is not because he is like me, but because he is like you. It is impossible for a girl to get three lives without wasting a certain amount of time on some handsome fool.

SPEAKING OF EUGENICS...WHY NOT HAVE A SECRETARY OF PHYSICAL CULTURE.

By John T. McCutcheon.

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"Say, gents, I move we give boxing tournaments in the congressional library, and the motion goes, sec?"

Views of Our Legislators on Virginia's Needs  
Measures Which Will Be Urged in the General Assembly

The Times-Dispatch has addressed to the members of the coming General Assembly a request for their views on a number of important questions that will come before them. In these columns we print from day to day the answers members have forwarded.

Questions for Our Legislators.

1. Are you in favor of making fraud in elections a felony?
2. Do you favor effective laws prohibiting and punishing attempts to control voters by paying their poll taxes for them?
3. Do you believe that the judges and clerks of primary elections should be appointed by party committee or in the manner provided by the laws governing general elections?
4. Are you in favor of taking away from party committees the power to decide contested primary election cases, and placing said contests in the courts, where witnesses can be compelled to attend, and where false swearing may be punished as perjury?
5. Are you in favor of a law prohibiting the judges and clerks from using their influence at the polls for or against any candidates at general and primary elections?
6. What, in your opinion, is the solution of the tax question—do you favor segregation or a central board of equalization?
7. Do you favor the enactment of additional legislation facilitating the collection of the \$1,516,442.30 delinquent poll taxes now overdue three years, exempting delinquents whose income is less than \$50 per month.
8. Do you favor any change in the fee system? If so, do you think it ought to be entirely abolished or modified so as to require all fee officers to pay into the public treasury all fees collected by them over and above certain fixed, just compensation.
9. Are you in favor of a law requiring all persons employed to influence legislation to register with the Secretary of the Commonwealth, stating by whom employed and paid and the amount of their compensation?
10. Are you in favor of having open sessions of all legislative committees?
11. Do you favor the election of State delegates to the national convention at a primary election?
12. Are there any other questions upon which you desire to express your opinion?

O. L. Stearnes, of Roanoke.

In nothing has the leadership of The Times-Dispatch, in the cause of progressive Democracy, shown to better advantage than in its efforts for electoral reform in Virginia. Nor has a greater service than this been rendered the State in recent years. Your views, as I understand them, are substantially embodied in the first five questions which you have recently propounded to members of the incoming Legislature, which I very gladly answer in the affirmative.

Replying by your eighth and sixth question for the moment, which are undoubtedly of the first importance, I reply "Yes" to your seventh, ninth, tenth and eleventh question, also.

However, there are a number of other problems bearing upon the work of the Legislature of 1914, which are of more than passing interest and importance, but which cannot be discussed within the limits of a communication of this kind.

Referring by your eighth question, in reply to your eighth question, to the pending article in the issue of the local press on September 11, I give the local press on September 11, as follows: "The largest and most important questions, however, which confront the incoming Legislature, center around the various problems of finance and tax reform, which more and more are pressing for solution. No more vital or difficult problems have confronted the Legislature in a long while than those centering around tax equalization and segregation. The Times-Dispatch, in its leading editorial of July 30, in discussing Mr. Byrd's address before the State Bar Association, says: 'Segregation, he (I. e. Mr. Byrd) says, is but the means to the end, and means which are beyond the reach of Virginia at this time; equalization must be had before segregation is possible.' 'Though we are willing to give Mr. Moore and the other advocates of segregation a full hearing, and would gladly approve any practical system they might propose,' The Times-Dispatch agrees with Mr. Byrd. With all due respect to The Times-Dispatch and to Mr. Byrd, I do not agree with them in the above. I submit that segregation is not the means to the end, nor do I believe that equalization must be had before segregation is possible, nor do I believe that segregation is beyond the reach of Virginia at this time. But if the Legislature of 1914 goes resolutely at it, and keeps at it, a work of far-reaching moment and relief to the taxpayers of Virginia can be accomplished at this time.

"It is but proper for me to say that I have a plan which I shall embody in a series of bills, which differs in essential particulars from any that I have seen, which, if no better is proposed, I shall offer at the proper time, and those coming around the table at the Legislature convening, some one will bring forward a plan so admittedly feasible and so free from the objections that have been generally raised to those proposed so far, that public

Queries and Answers

La Valliere. Please give the pronunciation of "la Valliere," and tell me what the word means. It is an ornament for the neck, considered to be named for Louise Françoise de la Baume in France. Duchesse de la Valliere, a personage of the court of Louis XIV. The name "La Valliere" is borne by several families now in France, and the pronunciation is la Valliere. (The first two letters in lack) val in the English, "la" is pronounced in the same way, except the last syllable is "li" instead of "li." This would be about as close to the proper pronunciation as unmarked English letters can show.

Table Usage.

When they are served on individual dishes, does one eat English peas and stewed tomatoes with a spoon, or a fork? Is it better to leave knife and fork on plate when it is "passed," or to hold them in the hand?

Table etiquette may scarcely be said to exist where there is no service for the diners need to help themselves. You would do better to use a fork for the peas and tomatoes, and a common sense would suggest retaining the knife and fork when a plate is passed, as you, by this method, save the possibility of their being dropped.

YOU can start the New Year right by opening a Savings Account with this strong bank. 3 per cent interest in paid and positive safety assured to each depositor.

National State and City Bank  
Capital and Surplus, \$1,000,000.